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Message Text

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17
ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AGR-05 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 L-03 NSC-05 SS-15

STR-04 CEA-01 PA-01 PRS-01 (ISO) R

DRAFTED BY EB/ICD/TRP-PPPILKAUSKAS:MW
APPROVED BY EB/ICD/TRP-PPPILKAUSKAS
ARA/CEN-GGOWEN
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USDA/AMS-FHEDLUND
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R 232036Z JUN 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY QUITO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL TO PURCHASE UNITED BRANDS (UB) OPERATIONS
REF: MANAGUA 1986 (NOTAL)

1. DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING THE EXAMINATION OF THE POSSIBLE
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FORMATION OF A CONSORTIUM OF LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS

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AND/OR PRIVATE INTERESTS TO PURCHASE SOME OF THE TROPICAL PRODUCTS MARKET OPERATIONS OF UB AND BANANA OPERATIONS IN PARTICULAR HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN MENTIONED INFORMALLY AMONG BANANA INTERESTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA FOR SOME TIME. THIS IS NOT A NOVEL THOUGHT ON THE PART OF FERNANDEZ HOLMANN. DISCUSSIONS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN A BIT HALF-HEARTED AND SOMEWHAT LESS THAN FULLY SERIOUS.

2. THE TOPIC WAS MENTIONED IN CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS ON A TOTALLY INFORMAL BASIS AT THE APRIL-MAY 1975 MEETING OF THE FAO INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON BANANAS (IGB) IN ABIDJAN, IVORY COAST. PANAMANIAN AND COSTA RICAN REPRESENTATIVES MADE OFFHANDED REMARKS ON THE THEME.

3. THE ESSENCE OF THE CONVERSATIONS APPARENTLY CENTERED ON THE STATED DESIRE OF BANANA PRODUCERS TO OBTAIN A GREATER PARTICIPATION IN THE MARKETING CHAIN FOR BANANAS IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE PERCENTAGE OF THE FINAL PRICE OF

THE FRUIT GOING TO THEM. BECAUSE OF THE DIFFICULT FINANCIAL CONDITION OF UB AND THE INTERNAL COMPANY PROBLEMS BEING PUBLICIZED THE CHATTER ON THE SUBJECT REVIVED.

4. ON BASIS OF PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH UB OFFICIALS WE THINK SUCH TALK IS SURE TO ENCOUNTER A NEGATIVE RESPONSE FROM UB MANAGEMENT. UB PROBABLY WOULD LIKE TO SELL PRODUCTION PROPERTIES IF IT COULD MAKE A REASONABLE SALE AT A FAIR PRICE AND CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN THE MARKETING CHAIN. THE IDEA OF EXPORTER PARTICIPATION IN THAT CHAIN IS A HORSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROCUREMENT, BUSINESS FIRMS, BANANAS, PROPOSALS (BID), DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE147179
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PPPILKAUSKAS:MW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750221-0777
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750624/aaaaavmw.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 MANAGUA 1986
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <11 DEC 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSAL TO PURCHASE UNITED BRANDS (UB) OPERATIONS
TAGS: ETRD, NU, UNITED BRANDS
To: MANAGUA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006